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SIPDIS

IO/EDA FOR WINNICK

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/12/2013

TAGS: [AORC](#) [FAOAORC](#) [FAO](#)

SUBJECT: FAO TERM LIMITS: OPTIONS

CLASSIFIED BY: LUCY TAMLYN, ALTERNATE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE

11. (C) THERE IS SHARP DIVISION IN THE OECD GROUP OVER TRANSITION MEASURES ON THE APPLICABILITY OF TERM LIMITS FOR THE CURRENT FAO DIRECTOR GENERAL (DG). THE EU IS READY TO ALLOW THE DG AN OPPORTUNITY TO RUN FOR A FOUR YEAR TERM (NON-RENEWABLE) IN 2005 AS PART OF A PACKAGE WHICH WOULD INCLUDE A CHANGE TO THE FAO BASIC TEXTS TO INTRODUCE TERM LIMITS. AUSTRALIA, CANADA AND NEW ZEALAND DO NOT SUPPORT ALLOWING THE INCUMBENT TO RUN AGAIN BUT ARE CONCERNED THAT A SPECIFIC PROHIBITION MAY CAUSE THE G-77 TO BACK OFF SUPPORT FOR TERM LIMITS ALTOGETHER. THE FRIENDS OF THE CHAIR MUST
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COME TO AGREEMENT SOMETIME IN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS OR RISK DEFERRING THE POSSIBILITY OF ACHIEVING AN AMENDMENT TO THE FAO BASIC TEXT FOR FOUR MORE YEARS. END SUMMARY.

12. (C) THE OECD GROUP MET ON MARCH 12 TO DISCUSS THE APPROACHING MARCH 17 MEETING ON FAO DIRECTOR GENERAL TERM LIMITS. THE GREEK AMBASSADOR EXPLAINED THE EU POSITION: THE EU SUPPORTS A FOUR YEAR TERM RENEWABLE FOR AN ADDITIONAL FOUR YEARS. AS A FALL-BACK THEY WOULD SUPPORT A SIX YEAR TERM RENEWABLE FOR FOUR YEARS. IN BOTH CASES THEY WOULD ALLOW THE INCUMBENT TO RUN AGAIN AS A CANDIDATE FOR ANOTHER FOUR YEAR TERM (NON-RENEWABLE). THE EU INTENDS TO MEET WITH REGIONAL GROUPS TO "EXCHANGE VIEWS" BEFORE THE MARCH 17 MEETING.

13. (C) THE DELEGATE OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA REPORTED THAT ALTHOUGH THE ASIAN GROUP LACKED A COMMON POSITION OVERALL, MANY KEY COUNTRIES SUPPORTED A TERM OF FOUR YEARS RENEWABLE ONCE (THAILAND, PHILIPPINES, INDIA). NONETHELESS, THESE COUNTRIES WERE UNLIKELY TO BREAK RANKS IF THE LARGER G-77 SOUGHT A LONGER TERM. WHILE ASIAN GROUP MEMBERS DID NOT HAVE A POSITION ON TRANSITIONAL MEASURES, KOREA NOTED THAT HE HAD NEVER HEARD FROM ANY OF THOSE MEMBERS THAT THE INCUMBENT MUST BE ALLOWED TO RUN AGAIN. THE DELEGATE OF AUSTRALIA REPORTED THAT HIS CONVERSATIONS WITH TWO KEY G-77 COUNTRIES, PAKISTAN AND BRAZIL INDICATED THAT FOUR PLUS FOUR WAS "DEFINITELY FEASIBLE."

14. (C) THE DELEGATE OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA ASKED THE EU IF THEY WERE NOT WORRIED THAT THEIR POSITION ON TRANSITION MEASURES "SENT A SIGNAL" CONCERNING THE 2005 ELECTIONS AND POSSIBLE OECD SUPPORT FOR THE INCUMBENT WHICH WOULD AFFECT
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THE FIELD OF CANDIDATES AND THEIR POTENTIAL SUPPORT. HE ASKED IF IT MIGHT NOT BE BETTER TO HAVE AGREEMENT THAT THE DG IS AN INCUMBENT LIKE ANY OTHER, RATHER THAN SINGLING HIM OUT FOR SPECIAL TREATMENT. IN RESPONSE, THE EU EXPRESSED ITS CONCERN THAT THIS APPROACH MIGHT ENCOURAGE THE DG TO RUN FOR A FOURTH TERM.

15. (C) U.S. DEL AGREED THAT WE SHOULD NOT SEND ANY SIGNAL WHICH COULD BE INTERPRETED AS SUPPORT FOR A THIRD TERM AND NOTED THAT IT WAS IMPERATIVE THAT THE EU BE MORE DIRECT WITH G-77 INTERLOCUTORS CONCERNING THE EU DIRECTIVE BARRING EU MEMBERS FROM VOTING FOR ANY INCUMBENT WHO HAS SERVED 12 YEARS. THE EU RESPONDED THAT THE EU DIRECTIVE WAS "NOT GERMANE" AND THEY WOULD NOT RAISE IT.

16. (C) U.S. DEL ALSO NOTED THAT THAT POLITICAL PRESSURE NEEDED TO BE MUSTERED IN ORDER TO GET THE MESSAGE TO THE DG THAT HE SHOULD NOT RUN AGAIN FOR A THIRD TERM. SHE NOTED IN THIS REGARD THE GENERALLY HELD VIEW THAT HE WAS INTERESTED IN FOUR MORE YEARS, AND WAS UNLIKELY TO RUN FOR A FOURTH TERM. U.S. DEL WARNED THE EU THAT ITS CONSULTATIONS WITH REGIONAL GROUPS SHOULD NOT RESULT IN THEM BRINGING A "FAIT ACCOMPLI" TO THE TABLE ON MARCH 17 AS THIS WOULD NOT BE ACCEPTABLE TO OTHER MEMBERS OF THE FRIENDS OF THE CHAIR GROUP.

17. (C) THE DELEGATE OF CANADA OPINED THAT SILENCE ON THE QUESTION OF TRANSITION MEASURES MIGHT BE PREFERABLE. IF THERE WERE NO TRANSITIONAL MEASURES, THE GENERAL INTERPRETATION WOULD BE THAT THE DG WAS FREE TO RUN LIKE ANY OTHER CANDIDATE; THE OECD WOULD HAVE SENT NO SIGNAL ON WHETHER IT WOULD CONDONE HIM SEEKING A THIRD TERM OR NOT. IN THE
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INTERIM BETWEEN THE DECISION IN 2003 AND THE ELECTIONS IN

2005, OECD MEMBERS COULD LOBBY AGAINST A DIOUF CANDIDACY. THE DELEGATE OF AUSTRALIA WARNED THAT THE ABSENCE OF CLEARLY LAID OUT TRANSITIONAL MEASURES (PRO OR CON) RAN THE RISK OF CREATING CONFUSION AND FORCING THE ORGANIZATION TO CONTINUE THE PROCESS OF EXAMINING THE QUESTION, THEREBY TYING UP SCARCE RESOURCES. NEW ZEALAND ARGUED THAT TERM LIMITS WAS A "PACKAGE" AND THAT THE OECD WOULD HAVE TO GIVE SOMETHING UP. THE OBJECTIVE WAS TO GIVE UP THE MINIMUM -- WHICH IN THIS CASE APPEARED TO BE THE EU OPTION OF ALLOWING THE INCUMBENT A FOUR YEAR TERM ONLY.

18. (C) COMMENT: WE DO NOT EXPECT MORE THAN TWO MORE MEETINGS (INCLUDING THE MARCH 17 MEETING) ON THIS ISSUE. THE FRIENDS OF THE CHAIR MUST COME TO AGREEMENT ON A PROPOSAL TO FORWARD TO THE JUNE COUNCIL OR RISK DEFERRING THE POSSIBILITY OF ACHIEVING AN AMENDMENT TO THE FAO BASIC TEXTS FOR ANOTHER FOUR YEARS. ONE OPTION WOULD BE TO JOIN THE EU IN SUPPORTING AN AMENDMENT TO THE BASIC TEXT TO ALLOW FOR FOUR TERMS RENEWABLE ONCE WITH EXPLICIT MEASURES STATING THAT THE DG MAY

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ACTION IO-00

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RUN AGAIN FOR A FOUR YEAR TERM. ANOTHER OPTION WOULD BE AN AMENDMENT TO THE BASIC TEXTS TO ALLOW FOR FOUR YEARS RENEWABLE WITH THE UNDERSTANDING THAT THE DG HAS THE SAME RIGHTS AS ANY OTHER NEW CANDIDATE (EITHER EXPLICITLY OR BY THE ABSENCE OF ANY "TRANSITION MEASURES"). THE FIRST OPTION HAS THE ADVANTAGE OF ATTAINABILITY AND SIMPLICITY: THE DRAWBACK IS THAT IT PRACTICALLY INVITES THE DG TO SPEND ANOTHER FOUR YEARS IN THE JOB; THE SECOND OPTION RUNS THE RISK (WHICH WE JUDGE SMALL) OF HIM SPENDING ANOTHER EIGHT YEARS IN THE JOB. IT HAS THE ADVANTAGE OF NOT SENDING ANY SIGNALS ON MEMBER SUPPORT WHICH MIGHT DETER POSSIBLE CANDIDATES FROM SEEKING THE POSITION. END COMMENT.

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